

# Downtown Livability Initiative



## Advisory Committee Meeting

*February 19, 2014*

*6:30pm*



# Summary of Direction from 1/15

## ■ Alternatives Workshop

- Two groups of Committee members & staff resources
- Focused discussion on draft alternatives and strategies as presented in Alternatives Workbook
- Report out on each group's recommendations to move forward for evaluation and analysis

## ■ Report Outs

- **Most often similarities between the two groups**
- **Handful of differences**
- **Some new elements suggested to be analyzed**

# Summary of Direction from 1/15

- Approach used to capture Committee direction; focus on establishing the broadest range of alternatives or strategies for analysis and evaluation
  1. Concurrence from both groups to move forward = *Move Forward*
  2. Concurrence from both groups to eliminate = *Do Not Move Forward*
  3. One group move forward; other eliminate = *Move Forward*
  4. New idea recommended from either of the groups = *Move Forward*

# Building Height and Form

Draft Range of Alternatives ➡	Workshop Direction (1-15-2014) ➡	Proposed Alternatives to Analyze
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Status Quo</b> – Height and density transitions from Downtown Core out to perimeter areas under current Code provisions.               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Variation to equalize residential and nonresidential FAR and height</li> </ol> </li> <li><b>Departure for Extraordinary Amenity(ies) in Core</b> – Potentially increase height in Downtown Core up to a “super-maximum” (600 feet is proposed) to accentuate the “wedding cake”.               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Variation to equalize residential and nonresidential FAR and height</li> </ol> </li> <li><b>Departure for Extraordinary Amenity(ies) Downtown-wide</b> – Would evaluate Downtown Core and non-core areas to achieve greater district identity and respond to different conditions (such as topography), including potential for height increases under certain circumstances in Perimeter B/C; would not include study of Perimeter A.               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Variation to equalize residential and nonresidential FAR and height</li> </ol> </li> </ol>	<p><u>GROUP #1 (Laing, Bannon, D’Amato, Lopez, Helland, Stout)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Status quo provides good baseline for comparison.</li> <li>Alternative 2 should move forward and provide clear rationale for “super-maximum” height in core (may be higher than 600 feet).</li> <li>Alternative 3 should move forward and examine entire Downtown, including Perimeter Areas.</li> <li>Agree to examine residential and nonresidential FAR and height equalization across all zoning districts; take into account nonresidential floorplate needs.</li> </ul> <p><u>GROUP #2 (Simas, Chaplin, Ferris, Guenther, Jackson, Maxwell, Powell)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not necessary to move Alternative 2 forward; Alternative 3 includes analysis of the Core area.</li> <li>Agree that Alternative 3 should move forward.</li> <li>Should also examine potential FAR departure/increase Downtown-wide for extraordinary benefit.</li> <li>Should not examine the 1a, 2a and 3a variations that equalize residential and nonresidential FAR and height.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Proposed alternatives and common elements include the broadest range of ideas based on direction from small group discussion. Alternatives below to be analyzed against baseline/status quo for comparison.</b></p> <p><b>Departure for Extraordinary Amenity(ies) in Core</b> – Evaluate potential height and FAR increases in Downtown Core up to a “super-maximum” to accentuate the “wedding cake” (exact “super-maximum” height and FAR to be determined with supporting rationale).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sub-element: Variation to equalize residential and nonresidential FAR and height taking into account floorplate needs</li> </ol> <p><b>Departure for Extraordinary Amenity(ies) Downtown-wide</b> – Evaluate potential height and FAR increases Downtown-wide to achieve greater district identity and respond to different conditions (such as topography).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sub-element: Variation to equalize residential and nonresidential FAR and height taking into account floorplate needs</li> </ol>
Draft Common Elements ➡	Workshop Direction (1-15-2014) ➡	Proposed Common Elements to Analyze
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In all alternatives, Perimeter District A and first 150 horizontal feet of Perimeter B are left as status quo; critical neighborhood transition.</li> <li>Explore increased height and density for the DT-OLB District on the east side of 112th Avenue NE.</li> <li>Explore potential revisions to floorplate and tower configurations (e.g. larger bases if architectural treatment is detailed and pedestrian-oriented).</li> <li>Any modifications to allowable building heights or densities would be accomplished through and linked to the update of the Amenity Incentive System.</li> </ol>	<p><u>GROUP #1</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do not agree with common element A; Perimeter Areas should be examined.</li> <li>Agree with common elements B and C.</li> <li>Suggest rewording D as follows: Explore whether modifications to allowable buildings heights or densities could be related to updates of design guidelines and the amenity incentive system.</li> <li>New common element: Explore additional opportunities for FAR transfer.</li> </ul> <p><u>GROUP #2</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agree with all four common elements to move forward.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore increased height and density for the DT-OLB District on the east side of 112th Avenue NE.</li> <li>Explore potential revisions to floorplate and tower configurations (e.g. larger bases if architectural treatment is detailed and pedestrian-oriented).</li> <li>Explore whether modifications to allowable buildings heights or densities could be related to updates of design guidelines and the amenity incentive system.</li> <li>Explore additional opportunities for FAR transfer.</li> </ul>

# Tentative Calendar for Topics

- **March 19:** Pedestrian Corridor, Public Open Spaces
- **April 16:** Design Guidelines Framework, Incentive System Framework
- **May 21:** Height and Form (incl. OLB), Downtown Parking
- **June:** Design Guideline Details, Incentive System Details, Integration & Wrap-Up

*Draft calendar: Subject to change*



DRAFT Evaluation Criteria	Building Height and Form (incl. OLB)	Major Pedestrian Corridor	Public Open Space	Amenity Incentive System	Design Guidelines (incl. OLB)	Downtown Parking
<b>Detailed Factors</b> <i>What will be evaluated for each topic</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Potential of added height and FAR to "lift" incentive system</li> <li>Access to light and air between buildings</li> <li>Public spaces – views, shade and shadow impacts</li> <li>Effect of added FAR and height on building massing and form at both pedestrian level and at larger scale</li> <li>Ability to promote variability in building heights and extraordinary design</li> <li>Views within Downtown, from I-405, from surrounding neighborhoods</li> <li>Transition in bulk/ scale/height with adjoining neighborhoods</li> <li>Ability to reinforce district identity</li> <li>Effects of any added FAR on transportation system</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Effectiveness in enhancing the Pedestrian Corridor's character and memorability through:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creation of an interesting and varied pedestrian travel sequence</li> <li>Human scale</li> <li>Attractiveness</li> <li>Comfort, safety, and amenities</li> <li>Adjacent building design and interface</li> <li>Activities and programming</li> </ul> </li> <li>Responsiveness to emerging changes, including the NE 6th Street light rail station</li> <li>Interim, incremental improvement versus permanent conditions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Effectiveness of strategies in promoting higher quality, more usable open spaces that respond to their neighborhood context through:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promoting distinct neighborhood identities</li> <li>Creating a variety of activities, including opportunities for active recreation</li> <li>Enhancing users' comfort, safety, and amenities</li> <li>Improving pedestrian access and linkages</li> <li>Providing opportunities for people to gather and socialize</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Added "lift" to incentive system through additional height (and FAR)</li> <li>Development economics – economic calibration to ensure amenity system is real incentive</li> <li>Public benefit yielded by amenity system</li> <li>Ability to prioritize and achieve amenities most important to livability</li> <li>Elements that should be required outright versus incentivized</li> <li>Complexity and usability of the system</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Extent to which updated design guidelines succeed in:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increasing focus on the public realm and pedestrian experience</li> <li>Reinforcing neighborhood character and identity</li> <li>Emphasizing site design and dynamic urban architecture</li> <li>Encouraging creativity</li> <li>Incorporating newer ideas (e.g. Great Streets, design charrette)</li> <li>Allowing flexibility (e.g. design departures based on established criteria)</li> <li>Being user friendly, visual and clear</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Impacts on adjacent land uses, including any spillover impacts</li> <li>Market demands of various uses, allows for appropriate flexibility</li> <li>Special parking needs of unique neighborhood conditions (e.g. Old Bellevue)</li> <li>Relationship to multimodal vision for Downtown</li> </ul>
<b>Council Principles</b>	<i>Checked boxes show Council Principles that apply most directly to each topical area.</i>					
1. Refine the incentive system to develop the appropriate balance between private return on investment and public benefit.	✓			✓		
2. Promote elements that make Downtown a great urban environment while also softening undesirable side effects on Downtown residents.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
3. Increase Downtown's liveliness, street presence, and the overall quality of the pedestrian environment.		✓	✓	✓	✓	
4. Promote a distinctive and memorable skyline that sets Downtown apart from other cities, and likewise create more memorable streets, public spaces, and opportunities for activities and events.	✓		✓	✓	✓	
5. Encourage sustainability and green building innovation in Downtown development. Enable design that promotes water, resource, and energy conservation, and that advances ecological function and integrity.			✓	✓	✓	
6. Respond to Downtown's changing demographics by meeting the needs of a wide range of ages and backgrounds for an enlivening, safe and supportive environment.		✓	✓	✓	✓	
7. Promote elements that will create a great visitor experience and a more vital tourism sector for Downtown.		✓	✓		✓	✓
8. Strengthen Downtown's competitive position in the global and regional economy, while reinforcing local roots and local approaches.	✓					✓
9. Maintain graceful transitions with adjoining residential neighborhoods, while integrating these neighborhoods through linkages to Downtown attractions.	✓				✓	✓
10. Refine the Code to provide a good balance between predictability and flexibility, in the continuing effort to attract high quality development that is economically feasible and enhances value for all users.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
11. Promote through each development an environment that is aesthetically beautiful and of high quality in design, form and materials; and that reinforces the identity and sense of place for Downtown and for distinct districts.	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
12. Advance the theme of "City in a Park" for Downtown, creating more green features, public open space, trees and landscaping; and promoting connections to the rest of the park and open space system.		✓	✓	✓	✓	